



Organic Regulations

Common Questions About 7CFR Part 205 Crop Standards

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How are the standards organized?

- Farm or Crop *
- Livestock
- Processing and handling
- Regulations for state and certifying agencies
- National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances

Easily Misunderstood Crop Standards

- Seed and Planting Stock Standards: (205.204)
- Exempt Producers/ Handlers: 205.101(a)(1) and 205.101(c)(2)
- Manure and Compost Standards: 205.203(c)(1-2iii)

Seed and Planting Stock Standards (205.204)



Must you use organic seeds to produce an organic crop?

YES = Organic Sprout Production



Must you use organic seeds to produce an organic crop?

NO= When organic equivalent is not commercially available

- Seed search documentation required by certifying agencies
- Non-GMO statements
- Can be treated with a substance on the National List of Allowed Synthetics



Must you use organic annual seedlings to produce an organic crop?

YES= Unless a temporary variance is issued by the AMS, USDA or a representative of these agencies.



What about planting stock?

Non-organic planting stock or perennials can be used to produce an organic crop:

- Once they have been organically managed for 1 year



Use of seeds, seedlings or planting stock treated with prohibited substances to produce organic crops?

- NEVER, unless it is in accordance with state phytosanitary laws



Farms Exempt from Certification

205.101(a)(1) and
205.101(c)(2)



Producers Exempt from Certification= Organic Ag Income <\$5000 annually

- Can produce agricultural products labeled 'organic'
- Must comply to organic production and handling requirements
- Exempt from writing an Organic System Plan
- Must keep records for 3 years
- Products can't be labeled as 'organic' ingredients in another operation's product
- Standards don't restrict to only direct marketing

Manure and Compost Standards: 205.203(c)(1-2iii)



Soil Fertility and Crop Nutrient Management Standards (205.203)

Producers manage plant and animal materials to improve or maintain organic matter in soil.

- No prohibited substance additives
- No contamination of soil or water
- Rules for raw manure and composted plant and animal materials*
- Rules for use of soil amendments and practices

Does Manure Need to be Composted?

YES, unless:

- Used on crops not for human consumption
- Incorporated into soil 120 days before harvest if edible parts contact the soil
- Incorporated into soil 90 days before harvest if edible parts do not contact the soil.



Rules for Composting

In-vessel/ Aerated pile

- Initial C:N Ratio
25:1 - 30:1
- Maintain at
131° - 170°
over 3 days.

Windrow System

- Initial C:N Ratio
25:1 - 30:1
- Maintain at
131° - 170° and turn
5 times, over 15
days.

Things to Remember When Considering/ Implementing/ Maintaining the Standards for Your Farm

- Questions- Ask your certifier,
communicate with fellow farmers
- Keep records
- Stay informed

RESOURCES:



- Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program Website
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMsv1.0/nop>
- Link to Organic Standards (7CFR Part 205)
- Organic Insider Subscription
- List of Certifying Agencies